



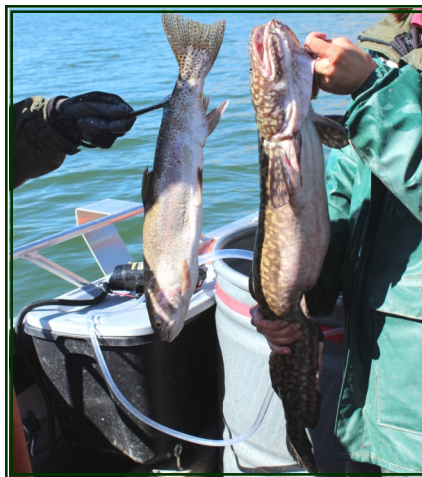


~Green River Fisheries Crew begins busy summer netting work ~ *Burbot gets greedy*



The fisheries crew in the Green River Region has been conducting annual gill netting and fish sampling to monitor fish populations in waters around southwest Wyoming. Gill netting is a widely-used technique by all game and fish agencies, to gather large numbers of fish for data collection and research. Gill netting requires time for preparation, time for setting nets, waiting time, and time for retrieving nets; not to mention net repairs! The time each of these tasks takes to complete will vary with the number and type of nets to be set and how long they will be left in the water. Many of the live game fish, like large lake trout, smallmouth bass, or German brown trout, are weighed, measured, and then released back into the water. Fisheries biologists can tell a lot about the health and quality of fish by reviewing and comparing years of gill netting data in area waters.

Photos left, top to bottom: Green River fish technician AJ Van-Domelen pulls in a gill net loaded with fish on Flaming Gorge; AJ (left) and fellow technician Sadie St Clair pulling in another Gorge gill net and Green River Fisheries Biologist John Walrath drives the boat and records fish species, weights and lengths.



This burbot swallowed a rainbow trout two thirds its size, as it sat suspended in the gill net. (photo above and left) Burbot were illegally introduced into the Green River Drainage in the late 1990's and continue to be a top predator of game fish in the Gorge and the entire Green River drainage.



## ~Rock Springs Game Warden Dave Hays Reaches Career Milestone~



*Rock Springs Game Warden Dave Hays (left) receives his service award from Green River Wildlife Supervisor Steve DeCecco (right).*



*Hays (right, in camo) instructs fellow game wardens on the firing range .*

Rock Spring Game Warden Dave Hays just reached a career milestone; Hays has worked for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department **35 years** and is not ready to call it quits, just yet.

*Hays, an Iowa native*, graduated from University of Wyoming in 1980 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology and Wildlife Management. Hays began his career with the WGFD in July of 1979 in the Laramie Game and Fish Regional Office, working various temporary appointments as a check station technician, biologist aid, district biologist, and eventually, a game warden trainee in Glenrock in 1982. In 1983, after graduating from the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy, Hays was assigned to Alcova to work as a watercraft enforcement officer and, later that year, to work in the Cheyenne Game and Fish Headquarters. In 1984, Hays was assigned to Douglas and served as the district game warden in Converse County for 10 years. Hays transferred to Green River in 1994 and to Rock Springs in 1997, where he has been district game warden for the past 19 years.

In 1993, Hays received the statewide WGFD Peer Recognition Award and was also named Wildlife Officer of the Year by the Wyoming Game Warden Association.

*"From the first day* I started this career I would often think to myself, I can't believe I'm getting paid to do this," Hays said. "After more than three decades, I still have a few of those same reflective moments."

*"Dave Hays* has distinguished himself as a professional and dedicated wildlife officer and wildlife manager throughout his career," said Green River Wildlife Supervisor Steve DeCecco. "Wyoming's wildlife and citizens have benefitted from his knowledge and expertise."

*Hays shares his life* with his two sons, David and Evan, and three dogs, who think his green patrol truck is their second home.

### *Enforcement Happenings*

There are unsolved poaching cases in the Green River Region. If you have any information about any wildlife violation please contact your local game warden or the **STOP Poaching Hotline** at:

**1-877-WGFD-TIP (1-877-943-3847 )**

- You can also report a wildlife violation at the WGFD website

<http://wgfd.wyo.gov>





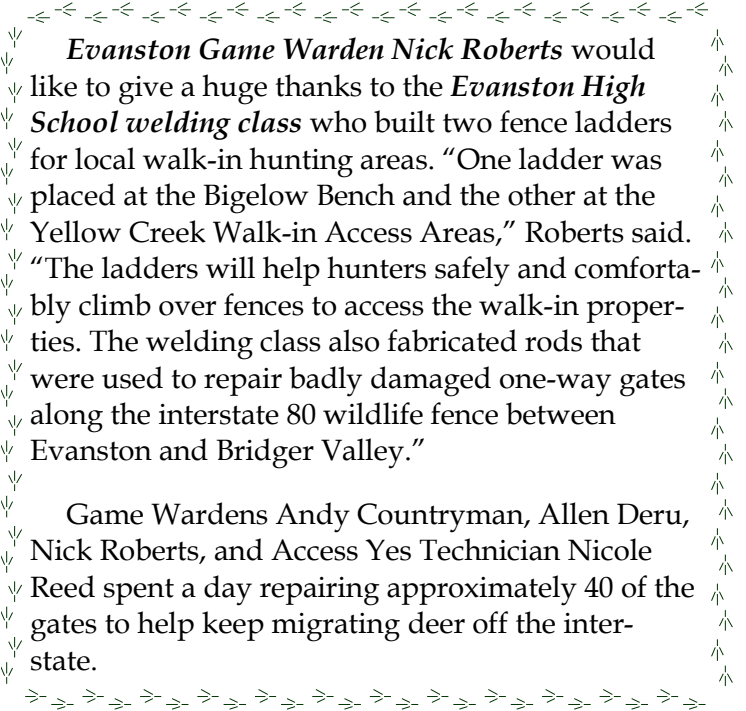




~Evanston High School Students Help Build Fence Ladders~ Cokeville hunter bags 1st bear~



*WGFD Southwest Access Yes Coordinator  
Andy Countryman helps out on the important  
fence repair.*



### *Badly damaged fence along Interstate 80*



*Cokeville Game Warden Neil Hymas* reports, as the spring warms up, black bear hunters are observing more activity, especially around bait sites. "Bear hunters in Wyoming are fortunate to have a high percentage of black bears sporting hair colors other than black," said Hymas." G&F personnel have already registered bears that were harvested with blonde, cinnamon, and several shades of brown-colored hides."

*Photo left: Kayla Cook of Cokeville, Wyoming*, with her first bear. Kayla graduated from high school the previous week, then shared an exciting bear hunt with her father, Scott, that resulted in a beautiful brown color-phase male black bear.





Baggs Game Warden Kim Olson was fortunate to snap this pronghorn fawn photo. A reminder to everyone reading this newsletter to please, never pick up young wildlife. Most wildlife mothers hide their young and return periodically to feed and care for them. People finding young animals often assume these newborns have been abandoned, but this is almost never the case. The mother knows where her young are, and will almost certainly return.

In addition to removing an animal from its wild home and decreasing its chance of survival, possession of game and most nongame species is against state and federal law. The best solution is to leave the young animals alone. Keep your pets away from them and talk to your children about not picking up young wildlife.

Olson also reported anglers are catching a few fish at High Savery Reservoir. Green River fisheries biologists continue to remove the white suckers from the reservoir to improve trout and kokanee populations. Approximately 3,000 white suckers were removed this year, over a three day period.

Since the completion of High Savery Dam in 2005 the Wyoming Game and Fish Department has stocked Tiger trout, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and kokanee salmon. There is also a wild population of Colorado River cutthroat trout and brook trout. In recent years, the white sucker populations have increased and are negatively impacting trout and kokanee salmon populations. Like many other reservoirs, High Savery is spilling over right now. (photo left, center)

Kemmerer Game Warden Chris Baird took the photo of a happy angler on Viva Naughton Reservoir. (far left) Tiger trout were stocked into Viva Naughton two years ago to provide anglers an opportunity to catch another game species. Green River fish personnel gill netted Viva Naughton Reservoir near Kemmerer in mid June and removed approximately 800 Utah chubs, which are competing with rainbow and tiger trout for habitat. (photo bottom)

Green River Fisheries Technician Graham Buggs (left), youngster Jed Wasseen (center) and his dad, Jim Wasseen, WLCI Coordinator, pick lots of Utah chubs from the gill nets.



~Rock Springs Hunter Education ~Muley Fanatics Donate Again! ~ Macro Invertebrate Mayhem~



For the first time ever, Wyoming Hunter Education was offered in Rock Springs High School thanks to teacher and founder of the Fire Law and Leadership Academy John Cundall. Green River I&E Specialist Lucy Wold worked with Cundall to teach the class at the same time assisting him with his certification to continue teaching the class each semester at the high school. Students did a hypothermia experiment using the "ice chamber of death" (a.k.a. cooler loaded with ice) as part of their survival training. (photo left, top)

The Southwest Chapter of Muley Fanatics Foundation donated ten Mossberg inert firearms to be used to teach students proper firearms handling. The guns cannot fire ammunition, but dummy ammo rounds may be loaded. The cost of the two gun sets was \$3,000.00! Thank you Muley Fanatics! Photo left, left to right: David Munoz, Aaron Logan, Dan Stanton, Chris Steffen, Don Cuthbertson, Kevin Spence, and Green River Wildlife Supervisor Steve DeCecco. (photo left)

Staff at Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge conducted multiple educational field trips for school groups from all over southwest Wyoming in May and early June. Cokeville Meadows Refuge Manager Katie Theule said they worked with 500 students this spring. GR I&E Specialist Lucy Wold went along on some of the field trips and taught students about migratory birds and macro invertebrate (aquatic insects that have no internal skeleton and you can see them with the naked eye) and how they influence fisheries ecology. (photo left)

Students "swam" across a playing field as stoneflies, caddis flies, mayflies, midges and rat-tailed maggots. Since the stoneflies, mayflies, and caddis flies were less tolerant of the pollution (Lucy and Katie) they died quickly and were replaced by more tolerable insects, midges and rat-tailed maggots. Fish don't like to eat them! They would much rather have a stone, caddis or mayfly! Makes sense, right? (photo left)







Office managers Sheila Watts (right) and Regina Dickson (left) have a little fun with the newsletter author and enjoy a brief break from watercraft registrations. Watercraft registration picks up considerably in June and will remain steady through August.

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~Critter Spotlight~  
Tiger salamander  
By Mark Zornes a.k.a. Leopold



Juvenile tiger salamander  
"Axolotl"

- **Wyoming's only salamander**, the tiger salamander is a large amphibian belonging to a group called mole salamanders.
- **Tiger salamanders** can be encountered in a variety of forms. Juveniles are fully aquatic small salamanders with visible, feather-like external gills, usually olive to lime green in coloration. Adults (especially males) are very large salamanders, some in excess of seven inches from snout to vent, excluding the tail. They are mottled in coloration, with a base color of olive to yellow, black, or green, highlighted with various shades of white and yellows. *To confuse things, some adults remain in a fully aquatic form and are referred to as neotenic or axolotl (from the Aztec god Xolotl, the god of lightning and death or the "water dog") by herpetologists (those that study reptiles and amphibians) and as "mudpuppies" by everyone else.* These can be in excess of 12 inches in total length.
- **All salamanders are associated with water**, even as adults. Since Wyoming is an arid, high desert state, it is no surprise we have few amphibians.
- **Tiger salamanders can be very abundant** in some portions of Wyoming, being especially common in beaver pond habitats, even high in the mountains (up to 10,000 feet). Tiger salamanders are often found in stock ponds, far from other water sources.
- **Tiger salamanders are efficient**, voracious predators, feeding exclusively on animal matter. Food items include aquatic insects, other salamanders, earth worms, and anything else they can capture that is smaller than them.